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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

October 1960

DAILY BRIEF

I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

USSR-Cuba: The USSR in the past week has stepped up its propaganda coverage of the Cuban situation and, in its nonbloc trade, apparently is giving top priority to filling Cuban trade requirements. The Soviet press now is featuring daily warnings of American plans for "counterrevolutionary invasions" of Cuba, as well as denunciations of the recently imposed new US restrictions on exports to Cuba and of Ambassador Bonsal's recall. Soviet media have avoided, however, any suggestions that the USSR might intervene militarily, and there have been no references to Khrushchev's July threat to use rockets in support of Castro.

In reaction to the new US trade restrictions, Havana will probably seek additional economic support from the bloc; however, because of the nature of Cuba's industrial plant, it may be forced to seek immediate alternate sources of supply in non-bloc countries, which are better equipped to supply Cuba's import needs. This may exert further pressure on Cuba's foreign exchange position.

"Che" Guevara, president of the Cuban National Bank, left on 21 October on an economic mission to the bloc, and is scheduled to visit Czechoslovakia, the USSR, Communist China, North Korea, and East Germany. [REDACTED]

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*USSR: Marshal Kiril Moskalenko, sixty year old commander of the Moscow Military District, has been named chief of Soviet rocket forces and deputy defense minister of the USSR to replace Mitrofan Nedelin, who was killed in an air accident on 24 October. A veteran ground forces officer, Moskalenko apparently has ties to Soviet premier Khrushchev which date from early in World War II. He is one of the "southern clique" of field commanders who were with Khrushchev at Stalingrad

and who have been brought into key positions in the Soviet high command since the ouster of Marshal Zhukov in 1957. Moskalenko's previous association with missile forces appears to have been limited to a three-year tour as commander of the Moscow air defense (PVO) district during the early 1950's. [REDACTED]

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III. CONCLUSIONS OF SPECIAL USIB COMMITTEE ON BERLIN SITUATION

The USIB has taken note of the following conclusions reached by its special committee on the Berlin situation. The committee has been reactivated and will report on the Berlin situation monthly, or more frequently as circumstances require.

1. Khrushchev has again committed himself to some kind of a "solution"--negotiated or unilateral--of the Berlin problem within a time limit, in this case during 1961.

2. He would still prefer to attain Western acceptance of a change in the status of Berlin through negotiations, presumably beginning with a summit meeting which he has indicated should come in the first half of 1961.

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3. The USSR hopes to confront the West with a series of faits accomplis designed to weaken the over-all Western stand when and if negotiations are resumed.

4. The current encroachment tactics in the area of West German--West Berlin relations are likely to continue and intensify. But Moscow will be careful to maintain control of East German actions in order to hold risk of hostilities to a minimum. For the same reason the more explosive and risky issue of Allied rights and access has been receiving less emphasis.

5. In general, Soviet Bloc actions regarding the Berlin problem will be determined to a considerable extent by developments not specifically related to this question. Inter alia, developments in the military balance and the outcome of Moscow's current dispute with Communist China could have an important impact on the Soviet approach to the Berlin question. The sub-committee would like to caution therefore that Soviet decisions on the Berlin issue may be determined by factors beyond its terms of reference.

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USSR Increases Attention to Cuba

Since the US announcement of a partial embargo on shipments to Cuba, Moscow has stepped up its propaganda coverage of the Cuban situation. The Soviet press now carries daily warnings of alleged American plans for "counterrevolutionary invasions" from Guatemalan bases and denunciations of US trade restrictions and of Ambassador Bonsal's recall. On 22 October Soviet propaganda media gave full and prominent coverage to the reception of a Cuban journalist delegation by Khrushchev and top Soviet journalists, and Izvestia's front page was dominated by reports of "invasion preparations organized by the US."

At the United Nations on 19 October, Soviet delegate Zorin departed from the text of a speech on disarmament to make a statement supporting Cuba, noting Cuban accusations of "US aggression and acts of intervention" and charging the United States with a policy of "open military provocations." Moscow has, however, avoided any suggestion that the USSR might intervene militarily in Cuba, and there have been no references to Khrushchev's threat on 9 July to use rockets in support of Castro.

In its nonbloc trade the USSR is apparently giving top priority to filling Cuban requirements, and in the wake of new US economic restrictions will probably move to demonstrate still further its willingness to back up in economic terms its moral and political support of the "national liberation struggle." Moscow already has made considerable and relatively costly readjustments in its shipping operations to accommodate Cuban petroleum requests and to make timely deliveries of such items as fertilizers, wheat, and, more recently, agricultural machinery and equipment.

Havana probably will seek additional economic support from the bloc. However, because of the nature of its industrial plant, Cuba may be forced to seek immediate alternate sources of supply in nonbloc countries--possibly Canada--which are better equipped to supply Cuban import needs. This may exert further pressure on Cuba's foreign exchange position.

"Che" Guevara, president of the Cuban National Bank, left on 21 October for an economic mission to the bloc and now is in Prague conferring with economic officials. He is scheduled to go on to the USSR, Communist China, North Korea, and East Germany. [REDACTED]

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New Soviet Missile Chief

The Kremlin has chosen Marshal Kiril Moskalenko to succeed the late Mitrofan Nedelin as supreme commander of Soviet missile forces and USSR deputy defense minister. Moskalenko's appointment was announced by TASS on 25 October, immediately following a terse communique that Marshal Nedelin had been killed in an air accident the previous day. No details concerning the location or circumstances of the crash have been released.

The new Soviet missiles chief is a veteran of more than forty years service in the ground forces. He was born in the Ukraine in 1900, joined the army during the civil war, and by 1940 was a major general of artillery. He commanded a division and a corps during the early years of World War II, and was an army commander after mid-1943.

Like the other key figures in the present Soviet high command, Moskalenko has ties with premier Khrushchev which date from the war years, when Khrushchev was a political officer with the rank of lieutenant general. The most important link between the two was probably forged at Stalingrad, where Moskalenko served with Marshals Malinovsky, Chuykov, and Yeremenko--the "southern clique" of field commanders which appears to have enjoyed Khrushchev's patronage particularly since the ouster of Marshal Zhukov in 1957.

After the war, Moskalenko served in the western Ukraine, and about 1950 was posted to the Soviet capital as commander of the Moscow air defense (PVO) district. His assignment as commander of both the Moscow garrison and the Moscow military district in July 1953 coincided with the arrest of former secret police chief Lavrenty Beriya, and he was a member of the trial board which condemned Beriya to death in December 1953. Moskalenko was promoted to the rank of Marshal of the Soviet Union in March 1955, and at the 20th Party Congress in 1956 he became a full member of the Party central committee without having served previously as a candidate member.

The missile forces were formed as a separate branch of the Soviet armed services last May; as their commander,

Moskalenko enjoys a rank roughly equivalent to that of the heads of the other three major components. The only available assessment of his abilities comes from captured German documents, which claim that while he was an accomplished tactician, he was temperamental and had a tendency to lose his self-confidence in difficult situations. [REDACTED]

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